

May 29, 1975

POOL REPORT #5

Meeting between President Ford and Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel in the Reception Room of the Ambassador's Residence.

Ford went out to meet Demirel at 11:30, but the pool was prevented by the Secret Service from observing the arrival. Then Ford and Demirel walked into the Reception Room and sat in blue, high backed chairs at one end of the approximately 30 foot by 50 foot roccoco room. Accompanying them, but standing at first on the sidelines were: Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Turkish Foreign Minister Ihsan Caglayangil and Ambassador to the U.S. Melih Esenbel. Several other, unidentified Turkish officials, hovered in the background.

Ford and Demirel talked about their respective flights. "How long a flight is it from Ankara?" Ford wanted to know. "About four hours," Demirel said. Ford said his own flight was seven hours, but "it was very pleasant."

Ford said "I've been hearing some nice things about you and your country from Henry (Kissinger)." The President said that he and Mrs. Ford "have never had the privilege of visiting Turkey. We had planned to go, but Mrs. Ford became ill." He said this was some time ago.

At this point, Kissinger sat down on an adjoining sofa and remarked, "I gained five pounds in Turkey last week, Mr. President." Ford laughed and rejoined, "He uses that as an alibi. It's an old problem."

The Turkish party sat on a red velvet sofa opposite Kissinger.

Ford asked Demirel "what kind of weather have you been having?" Demirel said "we have been having lots of rain--that means a good wheat crop." Then Demirel said something to the effect that Turkey has several types of climates, like California. Kissinger remarked that he had heard Turkey's climate had changed a good deal as a result of reforestation projects. Ford asked Demirel "how extensive was your reforestation program?" just as the pool was leaving.

Jim Wieghart
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